

The Chaplain as a P.O.M.

"Ambassador in Chains" *

by
Edwin J. Kozak

"Pray for me too, that I may be
given words to speak my mind
boldly, in making known the
Gospel revelation, for which I am
the ambassador in chains; that I
may have boldness to speak
as I ought." EPHESIANS

* The sub-title is not an original thought.
A book bearing that title was written by
Raymond M. Lane, M.A.

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1.
What an unforgettable experience to find oneself cut-off from one's unit and in the hands of the enemy! Just a moment ago your troops were shooting at them in whose hands you now find yourself. It is an experience different from any other. You, as a chaplain, are now a P.O.W. You are overcome by physical fear. What is your next move? What are your duties? There are no specific directives in print; the policies governing a Chaplain in such a situation are unknown. No Chaplain, P.O.W., returned from Communist rule to relate his experiences from which you could profit. What then, should a Chaplain do under such circumstances?

Questions such as these crop up from time to time in the minds of many Chaplains. In attempting to provide a practical solution to the ever recurring queries the author has drawn upon his imagination, aided by deductions drawn from allied subjects and sound basic principles. He presupposes that in the future some Chaplain may find himself an unwilling guest of a Communist enemy.

The purpose of this writing is:

1. To furnish information and guidance to chaplains in regards to the performance of their duties and activities of a P. O. W. chaplain, and

2. To lead the P. O. W. chaplain to accept and fulfill his responsibilities in all areas of ministrations to fellow prisoners-of-war.

Part I

Duties and Activities.

General. The chaplain has two distinct fields of activity - as an officer and as a Clergyman.

In a peace-time situation the chaplain continues to receive instructions and is given training to prepare him to ^{cope} ~~meet~~ with any eventuality on a future battlefield. Yet, there is an apparent lack of training for the "extension of the battlefield" (1) - the P. O. W. inclosure. It is incumbent upon each chaplain to prepare himself for this form of combat; to prepare himself as a CLERGYMAN and as an OFFICER.

1. - DA Pamphlet No. 30-101, para 74.

Part II

Preparation Before Capture

3.

- A. Preparation as a Clergyman. 1. The Chaplain's everyday prayerful life; his daily practice of virtues; his consecration for the zeal of souls; his confidence and trust in God will serve as an insuperable bulwark against all enemies and under any condition.
2. It will prove beneficial for a Catholic Chaplain to review from time to time "De Sacrificio Missae" in Moral Theology, especially "de materia dubia" which he may use under certain conditions.
3. In combat, besides keeping his Mass kit near to him at all times, the Catholic Chaplain should carry on his person Holy Oils, a pocket-size Sunday Missal. Should he become a prisoner-of-war and lose his Mass kit, the pocket Missal and the Holy Oils would serve him well. For the same reason, a Protestant or a Jewish Chaplain should carry on his person a pocket-size Bible.
- B. Preparation as an Officer. 1. The Chaplain, as an officer, is a LEADER of men. He should constantly review the elements of leadership and put them into daily practice. He should strive to develop the personal traits that are of paramount importance to the leader.

Over a period of time he will develop techniques of his own which he himself will be able to employ effectively.

2. To lead others the chaplain must lead himself. This is achieved by the practice of SELF-DISCIPLINE. Self-discipline consists in conforming oneself to certain moral rules for the purpose of correcting, strengthening and perfecting oneself. Being a virtue, it is developed through repeated voluntary actions. William James, an American psychologist writes:

"Keep the faculty of effort alive in you by a little gratuitous exercise every day; that is, be a systematically ascetic or heroic in little unnecessary points. Do every day or two something for no other reason than that you would rather not do it, so that when the hour of dire need draws nigh, it may find you not unnerved and untrained to stand the test." (1)

3. Self-discipline begets COURAGE, which can be defined as the ability to carry on

1. Psychology by William James. Henry Holt & Co. 1910, p. 149.

in spite of fear. Courage, as Senator John F. Kennedy explains it is:

"a diamond with many facets, and it owes much to its setting," (1)

A chaplain will often find himself in varied circumstances and settings. At all times he will be expected to display boldness and courage: boldness in overcoming many of life's difficulties; courage in the face of physical danger. He needs moral courage to maintain his convictions and to champion right.

Physical courage can be strengthened by physical and mental training. Sergeant Pate in his book *REACTIONARY!*, on the basis of his experience in Korea, emphasizes how tough and rugged training builds courage. (2)

The moral and spiritual training which the chaplain received and practices will produce the moral courage that will sustain him under all circumstances. Fenelon said, "There is no power that can force the inner citadel of the heart."

1. Senator John F. Kennedy, "Profiles in Courage".

Harper & Bros., New York, 1956

2. Lloyd C. Pate "Reactionary!" Harper & Bros. New York 1956, p. 138.

4. Training and Education.

General.. A chaplain must prepare himself both physically and mentally for the arduous duties that he assumes in becoming a military chaplain. Unlike the civilian clergyman who performs routine duties in a given territory, the military chaplain will minister to those committed to his care in various situations requiring of him physical stamina and mental alertness.

a. PHYSICAL FITNESS therefore, should be of primary concern to every chaplain. It is essential if he is to perform his duties ~~whether~~ whether in the ZI or in combat. Bishop James Byrne once wrote to his missionaries:

"Physical fitness was a negative essential; having it did not prove a mission vocation; but not having it proved there was no vocation. (1)

Above all, physical fitness becomes a "conditio sine qua non" should the chaplain have the misfortune of becoming a P.O.W.

"Then let them die march till they die! That is a military order," was the oft repeated

1. Raymond A. Lane, "Ambassador in Chains"

P. J. Kennedy, New York, 1955, p. 202.

2. Philip Crosbie, "March Till They die",

The Newman Press, Westminster, Md, 1956, p. 135

command of the "Tiger", a Major of the People's Army on the many death marches in Korea. Needless to say, only the physically fit survived.

b. SURVIVAL, EVASION AND ESCAPE TRAINING is the training prescribed in support of the Executive Order 10631 (DA BUL. 13, 1955), and in support of the Code of Conduct. It is prescribed by AR 350-225, dated 21 February 1958.

Every chaplain should become familiar with the cited AR and the Code of Conduct. He should participate in his unit's Survival, Evasion and Escape Training program to prepare himself physically and mentally should he fall into the hands of the enemy.

A chaplain's good example is one of his most important qualifications. By his voluntary participation in this training program, a chaplain will motivate and teach others the necessity of the program.

C. EDUCATION.

(1) Every chaplain should have a comprehensive knowledge of the enemy; of the enemy's country, culture and customs. It will provide him with a deeper insight of the people with whom

he may come in contact.

(2) A knowledge of the enemy's native tongue will prove invaluable to the chaplain. It will assist him in the performance of his duties as a combat chaplain in his ministrations to civilians or prisoners-of-war. The chaplain P.O.W. could use this knowledge either strategically by concealing this fact and utilizing it as a source of information and intelligence, or as an interpreter.

(3) A complete knowledge of Communism, its teachings and its goals will prepare the Chaplain to understand the system. It will provide him with the necessary background to teach about it to others.

(4) Every chaplain should study the provisions of the Geneva Convention (Prisoner of War) that he might know his rights as a prisoner-of-war. Possessing this knowledge he can readily come to the defense of others.

Part III

During Capture.

A Clergyman. When it is apparent that capture is inevitable the chaplain will rely on his

preparation before and during combat. Being prepared, he is forarmed. The shock and the fear that besets the soldier should not affect the chaplain too deeply. This is the hour when men will turn to their chaplain. His leadership, courage, confidence and trust in God will be put to test. At this moment he is mindful of II Corinthians 12:9: "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness". The Chaplain is aware that he may be troubled on every side, yet not distressed; he may be perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.

This is the hour when a chaplain can lead by good example. "Show thyself in all things an example of good works."⁽¹⁾ When a chaplain displays courage and utmost confidence in God —

"Confidence in prayer, which shows itself in two ways: positively, by the missionary's zeal for souls when things go right; and negatively, by his serenity and perseverance when things go wrong."⁽²⁾

1. Titus 2: 7
2. Raymond M. Lane, "Ambassador in Chains," John P. Kennedy, New York 1955, p. 202.

Things are going wrong; men are panicking, intelligent minds cease to function correctly. The enemy has surrounded your position. The chaplain is in a position to calm them and prevent mass hysteria by bringing them the spark of hope, even if only by a brief prayer.

Chaplain (Major) John W. Handy⁽¹⁾ narrates the incident that took place in Korea. He says:

"A battalion Task force of the 24th Infantry Regiment was given the mission to rescue of the 35th Infantry Regiment that had been cut off by the Chinese Communists. Being the regimental chaplain I went along.

During an active and furious engagement our Task force was cut off by superior Chinese forces. While waiting at the collection point for the wounded, a messenger got through to us with the message that our group was isolated and was on its own. I explained the situation to the medics and the wounded and encouraged every man who was physically able to try to make it on his own. Then I said to the men, 'Let us have a word of prayer.' During my prayer I

1. Chaplain (Major) John W. Handy, U.S.A. 9th Inf. Div. Ft. Carson, Colo. 1957-58.

was conscious of the predicament and how the majority could best fight their way out.

When I had finished, a Chinese minister, Mr. Wu Ling Pan, who accompanied the Task force to minister to the Koreans, said,

'Chaplain, may I have a word of prayer?'

He prayed: "Lord, when times are better use somebody else, but use me ~~now~~ now."

Whereupon, he closed his prayer, turned to me and said, 'Chaplain, for everybody's welfare, why don't we trust in God and remain here?'

This courage and confidence in God, in face of certain death as a Chinese traitor, inspired the men with such courage and confidence that they were able to defend themselves until eventually rescued by other battalions."

A chaplain's example can inspire his men with the will to fight in keeping with the Code of Conduct:

"I will never surrender of my own free will. I shall never surrender my men while they still have the means to resist."

Tompson? 7. A chaplain's prayer may be the last but not the least means of resistance. Longfellow's words "More things are wrought by prayer than the world dreams of" are applicable at all times.

B. As an officer. A chaplain displays lofty and inflexible courage and outstanding leadership. In accordance with the Code of Conduct he "will not surrender his men of his own free will, nor will he surrender them when they still have the means to resist."

The Code continues: "If I am captured I will continue to resist by all means available. I will make every effort to escape." These words burnt into the mind of a chaplain will now rend his heart. He is torn between two loyalties: to serve his country, or to serve his fellow-captives. Because the number of POWs is relatively small at the moment, in comparison to the remainder of the unit he serves he is governed by the rule "to do the most good for the most." He should make every effort to escape. By his example he will inspire others to measure up to the standards embodied in the Code of Conduct.

Part IV

13.

After Capture in the POW Inclosure.

4. as a clergyman. The Chaplain in a POW inclosure will witness unforgettable dramas of courage and patriotism, desperation and frustration. With his dreams shattered round him, cynicism will threaten to overpower him. There will be frustration. A chaplain fears he can no longer dream. War mocks inherent idealism. Clever men find it harder to be clever. A serious mind is bewildered and thwarted. There is a temptation to give away to panic. A chaplain's entire being is taxed almost beyond human endurance.

(1) Yet, as a chaplain and clergyman, he summons his physical and spiritual resources into being. He has the sustaining substance of FAITH which will keep him going when others have given up.

(2.) He puts his faith into action by resigning himself to the Will of God. At his ordination the Chaplain consecrated himself to the service of God and dedicated his life to lead others to Him. As a POW, conditions have changed but his purpose in life remains the same. He ~~need~~^{need} not adjust himself to a new goal but he

must ADJUST himself to a new condition.

Richard Crossie in his *March Till They Die* writes:

"If they [prisoners-of-war] adjusted themselves to it so well, it was because they had learned during disciplined, prayerful years in the cloister to make the Will of God their only guide."⁽¹⁾

Concentration therefore, for a chaplain should mean internment not in the physical sense of barracks and monotony but in the blessed experience of this "one thing I do." The life in an inclosure provides an opportunity to explore more fully the outreaches of the spirit. The Chaplain goes about his tasks with the calm determination of a Crusader in God's underground.

As a Crusader of God, by necessity he will be drawn underground that he might perform the many duties that may befall him. In the performance of his duties he will be obstructed and discouraged by an atheistic enemy employing irreligious ideas, attitudes and actions. These will egg him on to more vigorous activity.

1. Richard Crossie, "March Till They Die", The Newman Press, Westminster, Md 1956. p 110.

B. RELIGIOUS SERVICES. 1. The Chaplain is a religious and a spiritual leader in the P.O. It incline. He conducts religious services whenever possible. He provides religious services for all denominations should he be the only Chaplain there. Past experience has demonstrated that in some P.O. It camps public religious services, even though frowned upon, were tolerated to a certain extent. Benjamin A. Proulx, a professional journalist and a P.O. It, writes⁽¹⁾:

"After the third hymn the padre came forward to speak. There was a general shifting of legs and positions among the men. Then they became silent for a moment. When he spoke his voice carried to the four corners of the square.

His first words were these: 'Men, look around you and count your blessings'. Not a man stirred. For a few quiet seconds, the scene appeared stopped as upon a lecture screen. Then heads began to turn to the left and right. Men sat a little straighter. Their faces relaxed into half smiles. A sudden surge of emotion swept through the 7000 seated there.

1. Benjamin A. Proulx, "Underground from Hongkong", E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc. New York, p. 151

The padre had warded for us a half-forgotten fact. We were alive.

Thereafter, Sunday services took place of Saturday night speels in our esteem, something to be looked forward to throughout the week.

In other camps religious services were not permitted nor facilities provided as attested by Richard Crosbie⁽¹⁾:

"At no time during our internment have we priests been allowed any facilities for celebrating Mass."

Depending on the situation, the chaplain conducts religious services publicly or secretly, individually or in groups. A zealous chaplain conducts services daily. POWs. have time on their hands. The chaplain must fill in their idle hours. He must fill their minds with true realities lest the void be filled with Communist ideologies. In times of stress man will eventually turn to God. Father Tonne in his *The Story of Chaplain Kapuan* writes:⁽²⁾

"Catholic, Protestant and Jew were there, plus some that had no religion at all, but were starting to find one."

1. Richard Crosbie, *March Pull They Die*

2. Father Arthur Tonne "The Story of Chaplain Kapuan," Diddle Publishers, Emporia, Kansas 1954, p 172

If then it is religion that men hunger for, it is the duty of the Chaplain to supply it. Through the use of religion the Chaplain puts into their hands an effective weapon against all onslaughts of the enemy.

Because of the lack of his Mass kit, the Catholic Chaplain will be unable to offer the sacrifice of the Mass. Under such circumstances he does the best he can. He improvises as Chaplain Capuan did during his internment⁽¹⁾:

"Father had Easter Sunrise Services with the Rosary, Memorare, Stations of the Cross, Mass prayers and readings from the Bible and hymns".

- C. PROFESSIONAL DUTIES. 1. Teacher. Chaplain will teach most effectively by his own personal EXAMPLE. Works speak louder than words. The world despises a hypocrite. On the other hand, it praises and emulates the works of him who seals his words by a good example.
2. The Chaplain is a Tower of Strength and Charity. He takes care of the sick, comforts the sorrowing, brings consolation and the will to live to those on the verge of despair. He imitates a former

1. op. cit p. 180

brother chaplain, Kapoun⁽¹⁾

"who, emaciated and sick himself, rallied, comforted, cheered his fellow prisoners - tired men who no longer wanted to live.

Father Kapoun became the counselor, the nurse, the leader, the provider, the defender of his fellow prisoners, even the thief - for he "stole" food to keep his buddies alive."

2. The POW Chaplain is a Counselor, Friend and Confidant. The many nefarious methods of the enemy directed against prisoners-of-war will present many occasions for the Chaplain to counsel. One of the many methods used by the enemy is to withhold mail that is warm, loving and reassuring and to permit bad news to get through to the prisoners. Their purpose is to disrupt family ties, to plant the seed of despondency and to weaken the prisoner's morale. Richard Pape in his *Boldness Be My Heart*⁽²⁾ writes:

"The love for a wife or a sweetheart which they [prisoners] silently possessed was the food that fed men's hearts, the fuel of their enthusiasm and optimism in the unswerving purpose to live.... Many fellows

1. op. cit. p. 180

2. Richard Pape, "Boldness Be My Heart", London ELEN New York 1953, p. 154

who received the fateful news [about their unfaithful wives and sweethearts] went to pieces."

The alert chaplain senses these situations. He hastens with counsel and understanding to alleviate burdened souls.

3. The chaplain establishes a Character Guidance Program. This is another supporting weapon placed into the hands of the prisoner-of-war that can effectively counteract Communist propaganda.

D DUTIES AS AN OFFICER. SECULAR DUTIES.

Initiative has a carte blanche - a whole field, for a chaplain P.O.W. Initiative expressing itself in religious ways will flower. The chaplain, as an officer, seizes the initiative and assumes secular duties. If he is the senior officer he takes command. If not, he will obey the lawful orders of those appointed over him and will back them in every way. (Code of Conduct).

As a leader he becomes the servant of servants. He leads them on the extension of the battlefield. The characteristic traits of a leader are easily recognized by everyone.

1. He is alert and courageous; alert to the dangers that beset his men; courageous to stand in their defense.

2. He preserves a "sense of proportion which manifests itself in humor, a sense of humor which will strengthen the ability to see proper values, not to make mountains out of molehills, not to confuse mundane values with eternal values, and particularly, not to take oneself too seriously."⁽¹⁾ He is light-hearted, never light-headed. This trait will inspire confidence.

3. If "cleanliness is next to godliness", the chaplain will be a mirror of Personal hygiene. As a leader he is aware of the physical health of the command. He ~~installs~~ employs all sanitary measures to insure healthy living conditions. ~~And~~ Within the inclosure he may organize a sanitary corps which will supervise the health conditions.

4. He insists on Discipline. In a POW camp discipline is of paramount importance.

Discipline cements men into a group. An individual who separates himself from the mutual protection of the group becomes an easy prey for the enemy. Only group action can negate the designs of the enemy and will benefit the entire group.

1. Raymond M. Lane. "Ambassador in Chains."

5. He schedules Training - physical and mental.

Physical training will be mandatory for all who are physically capable. "Mens sana in corpore sano" (a healthy mind in a healthy body) is an axiom that takes on added importance in the POW enclosure. It not only will sustain the health of the individuals but also keep them busy and prevent idleness. In this respect the Chaplain organizes athletics, resorting to ingenuity if necessary to provide equipment essential to the game. Physical fitness is also a necessary prerequisite for escape.

6. Mental training encompasses the study of a foreign language. The Chaplain organizes discussion groups, debating clubs, mental games - anything that will stimulate healthy thought. Mental training should prove beneficial to those who are physically incapable to perform other tasks.

Mental training includes instructions as a defense against indoctrination by the enemy. "Attendance at indoctrination or propaganda lectures may be compulsory. Silent, passive but determined resistance is the best course of action for a prisoner-of-war."⁽¹⁾

1. DA Pamphlet No 30-101 para 83.

Duane Thorin states:⁽¹⁾

"They had found their best protection against the constant harangue of communist propaganda. You had to ignore it, or you found yourself repeating it. Repetition, even in jest or derision could develop into a habit. Argue against it? Could you drain the ocean and walk across the bottom?"

6. Because the intermediate goal of the Communist propaganda is to breakdown the individual's loyalty to country, home and group, the chaplain counteracts this system by establishing various group movements which will forge a chain of loyalty to the groups. He institutes a form of community life and names a trusted man as a caretaker. All foodstuffs, cigarettes and other belongings are pooled together and distributed equally. Should the group be too large, it could be divided into cells. Each cell would appoint a caretaker. This system of behavior will discourage individuals from accepting any special favors from the enemy. It will forge individuals into a cohesive group where "united we stand" in mutual love, loyalty and trust.

1. Duane Thorin, "A Ride to Panmunjon", Henry Regnery Co. Chicago.

7. The Code of Conduct requires that every man will make an effort to escape and aid others to escape.

Here a chaplain is faced with a dilemma. The Code of Conduct requires of him to escape. On the other hand, the law of charity demands that he remain in the P.O.W. inclosure to minister to the spiritual needs of his fellowman. The chaplain follows the Law to whom he dedicated his life. The principle of "doing the most good for the most" must prevail. If the chaplain were to leave his men now, who will supply the spiritual needs - the effective weapons against the Communist methods? The argument that his unit needs his service is not valid because by now his vacancy was filled by a chaplain replacement. By remaining with the prisoners-of-war the chaplain provides for the continuity of command, organization and of escape methods. In my opinion, it is the chaplain's duty to remain and provide spiritual life, preserve physical life and enable others to escape.

The Code of Conduct states: "I will make every effort to escape AND aid others to escape". Should the chaplain escape how will he help others to escape? The word "and" is

the key word. Can "and" be interpreted as also meaning "or" as it often happens in our language?

By remaining with the prisoners-of-war, the chaplain organizes an Escape Committee of trusted men who formulate plans and methods of escape.

These factors outweigh by far the other one requisite to escape.

CONCLUSION

A well trained and devoted chaplain can and will use all methods at his disposal to perform his duties while a prisoner-of-war. In working for others he works for himself, for God and for Country. Should the supreme sacrifice of his life be required, he bravely offer his life. "Greater love than this no man hath that a man lay down his life for his friends." In death the "Ambassador in Chains" still can preach.

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